The Piel Stem

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Purpose

It is hoped this paper will glorify God by contributing to the Church's understanding of the use of the piel verbal stem through a survey of piel uses described in grammars and commentaries (as well as a few additional uses proposed by this writer) and through an analysis of a selection of case studies from the Old Testament.

My goal is to provide the reader with a toolbox for understanding the piel verb stem not unlike the list we use to understand the many uses of the genitive case in Greek, or of the circumstantial participle. The number of potential piel uses may be oppressive at first (thirty-three are described here), but they are categorized under seven basic headings, and perhaps this will be manageable. Doubtless there will be scholars who will scoff in the future at some aspect of this presentation—it will be considered too simplistic, or overly complex, or too disregarding of the most recent scholarship (two Ph.D. Theses on the piel stem from 2015 were consulted), or it is too short (about which I agree), or it is too long. But as one of our seminary professors liked to say, in scholarship we simply stand on one another's shoulders, and so I offer here my own shoulders such as they are in all humility for the feet of my colleagues.

If this document serves as an aid to better exegesis and understanding of the Bible, then it has met and surpassed all expectations. Better exegesis, it is to be hoped, is a step toward better preaching and teaching. We cannot improve on the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, but we can improve our understanding of the languages through which that beautiful gospel has been transmitted to us.

I. ORIENTATION

The Piel Stem

It is a privilege and a blessing to serve in a fellowship in which every single pastor has learned the languages of the Bible. Most of us are not conversationally fluent in Koine Greek nor Classical Hebrew, and yet we are comfortable working in them for the purposes of exegesis, isagogics, homiletics, symbolics, and dogmatics. We do not need to stop and explain what a genitive is, nor a participle, nor do I feel the need to remind anyone of the piel verb stem which is the sole subject of this paper. We have attempted to heed Luther's charge: "This is Hebrew grammar. Those who do not know it should learn it" (LW 12 p. 324).

Nevertheless, for the sake of clarity and for the benefit of those outside our immediate fellowship who may come across this paper, I offer the following overview of the Hebrew verbal system.[a]

Every Hebrew verb is based on a root, often but not always identical with the qal 3rd masculine singular form of that verb. The root word is altered or added to in various predictable or at least identifiable ways to manipulate the root idea into additional or alternate points of reference. The various roots do not all appear in each of the seven main stems, but the variety of meaning can be seen from a root like קטל.

qal (light):	kill
nifal (passive):	be killed
piel (intensive?):	slaughter, sacrifice
pual (passive piel):	be slaughtered, be sacrificed
hifil (causative):	cause to kill
hofal (passive hifil):	to be caused to kill
hithpael (reciprocal):	kill oneself

We might spend time debating any of these stem definitions, such as whether or not the nifal is truly passive or if passive-reflexive might be a better way of describing the nifal. But in this presentation, we will narrow the debate to the more difficult stem of the group: the piel.

We will not spend time on the morphological features of the piel, since this is the one aspect of this stem about which all of the grammars agree, and about which we are all familiar. Our focus of attention here will simply be on identifying the use and meaning of the stem in its context.

The Grammars and the Piel

When my classmates and I sat at the feet of Professor Paul Eickmann at Northwestern College in the early 1990s, we used the same Weingreen's Hebrew Grammar (Oxford, 1959) that had been in use for several decades. In the five pages Weingreen gives to the piel (pp. 105-109), he never once labels the effect of the piel stem on its verbal root. Instead, he gives one example: "From the Qal שָׁבַר 'he hath broken' is derived the Piel שִׁבֵּר "he hath utterly broken, he hath shattered" (p. 105).[b] In the margin of my copy of Weingreen, probably at Professor Eickmann's direction, I wrote in pencil: *Intens.,* not even taking the time to write "intensive" out in full. Based on conversations with students of Hebrew in and out of our fellowship from the 1950s to

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[a] While identifying, counting, and analyzing the piel verbs of the Bible for this project, I found two instances in which all five of the main stems (qal, nifal, piel, hifil, and hithpael) all occur. The first is Exodus 21:9, and the second is Job 42:8. Another remarkable facet of the Job passage is that it also contains each of the five 'tenses' of the Hebrew verb: perfect, imperfect, imperative, infinitive and participle.

[b] In fact, one learns more about use of the nifal in the piel section of Weingreen that about the piel itself. In the vocabulary list under the verb קבץ we are told that the nifal is reflexive, and that "the nifal often as a reflexive force."

the present day, this word, "intensive," is nearly all of what most of us have learned about the piel stem in school.[a]

Throughout the world, this was the case in almost every Hebrew classroom (including Jewish Hebrew schools)[b] until 1968. From 1813[c] until 1968, almost every Hebrew textbook and grammar was influenced by or simply quoted from Gesenius. Our old Weingreen grammar is one of the better examples of this; perhaps the best. It is to the credit of the Northwestern College Hebrew faculty that this book was sought out and used until the present textbook, written by Eickmann and revised by the current MLC faculty (especially Prof. Nass), was produced in the 1990s.

1968

Besides being a turning point in world events,[d] 1968 was also the year that Ernst Jenni published in Germany the book *Das hebräische Piel*.[e] Jenni's classroom lectures after the publication of that book, his revision of the German Hebrew grammar book (Hollenberg-Budde) and other publications[f] show the development of his opinion of the piel verb and its use in Biblical Hebrew as well as the way in which the piel stem should be taught. It was in reading Jenni that the present writer became acquainted with the broader way of thinking about the piel stem presented here.

Qal 3rd Masculine Singular

Jenni's argument begins with the point that the qal 3ms root (e.g. קָטַל) is not in fact the "simple" or "main verbal stem" for all verbs (and some nouns—but that's another point). There is much evidence to support his view, but we do not need to present all of it here. The most recognizable evidence for most of us is the absence of a qal meaning for many verbs. This is why there are so many entries in BDB, Holladay, and other lexicons with unpointed roots. Jenni does not question whether the qal is the basis for much of the verbal system, but he maintains that it

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[a] There is no call to fault any Hebrew professor for the way this or any other part of the language is taught in our system. It is this writer's opinion that ours is one of the best instructions in the Hebrew language available in the Western Hemisphere and perhaps in the world, and our teachers have been performing a Herculean task in the way they carry us from complete ignorance to more than passing proficiency in the limited amount of time that they have. Our former Northwestern College and present Martin Luther College and Bethany Lutheran College faculties in particular (the three faculties with which this writer has had some association) continually plant nascent Hebrew skills into students and bring them to maturity before they ever arrive at the seminary, and for this we praise God.

[b] Many colleges employed Jews to teach Hebrew. One well-documented case is the seven-week course of Hebrew taught to Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders by J(oshua) Seixas of Oberlin College in the winter of 1835-36.

[c] 1813 is the first year that the Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar was published. Prior to that, lessons in Hebrew were not taught with standardized texts, but with rote-lessons based after the pattern of Hebrew School for boys in Jewish communities.

[d] The disturbances of 1968 were so profound and far-reaching that I have often used that year in Bible Classes and devotions as a comparison with the upheavals of 885 BC.

[e] Jenni wrote an article the year before (1967) titled *Faktitiv und Kausativ von ABD* (אבד) *'zu grunde gehen.'"*

[f] Including an article on the difference between nominal and verbal sentences and a large book on the Nifal stem.

can be demonstrated that the use and meanings of the seven[a] main stems "originally formed a closed system of grammatical categories."[b] In other words, each of the seven verbal stems stood as a unit and, to use a word that is not used by Jenni, the verbs did not <u>evolve</u> from an original stem, but always stood in opposition to (or in harmony with, depending on how you look at it) one another. So it is not as if there was a primitive verb, קָטַל *kill*, which Adam or Noah knew and understood, but only by the time of Abraham or Moses did its other stems נקטל *be killed*, קִטֵּל *slaughter/butcher*, התקטל *commit suicide*, etc., come into use.

This, Jenni proposes, is why a large number of verbs occur in the piel, the nifal and/or the hifil, but not the qal. The word (semantic root, morpheme, or whatever it might be called) was always there, but the people who spoke Hebrew understood that certain words such as צִוָּה "command" do not belong in the qal stem by the very nature of the word. And the most common piel word of all דִּבֶּר, "to speak," occurs in the qal and other stems so seldom that they make up just 4% of all occurrences of the root דבר.[c] This stands in opposition to the Gesenius-Kautzsch position that the verbal stems "in form and function, do not relate to each other but (only) to the qal."[d]

Ernst Jenni attempted to categorize the piel according to the system discovered in the analysis of Akkadian grammar.[e] In his book on the piel, he spends a great deal of space (pp. 20-123) to exploring the piel as a transitive verb where an intransitive qal exists. In the second part (pp. 123-229) he explores the use of the piel verb where the qal is transitive. In the third section (pp. 230-274) he discusses piel verbs for which no qal occurs. Finally (pp. 275-278) Jenni makes concluding statements about the piel based on the D-stem in Akkadian.

We might not agree with all of Jenni's conclusions. The purpose of this paper is not to refute Gesenius-Kautzsch nor to swallow Jenni "feathers and all," but to notice how the practical fruit of Jenni's labor in exploring the piel has helped to make sense of observations of which Ernst Jenni may be entirely unaware, particularly in the exegetical writings of confessional Lutherans in the last two centuries—which overlaps with the influence of Gesenius-Kautzsch on every modern Lutheran exegete.

For our purposes, Hebrew grammars might be divided into three groups:

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[a] Qal, nifal, piel, pual, hifil, hofal and hithpael. Many other stems occur with varying degree of rarity. Those related to the piel are the poel, polel, polal, palel, pilel, pilpel, pilpal, pilal, pulal, pealal and two Aramaic stems, the pael and peil. Apart from the Aramaic stems, the majority of occurrences of the rarer forms occur in Job, Psalms and the Major Prophets. Of the 1802 piel (etc.) forms in the Pentateuch, only .009% are not piel or pual forms.

[b] Siebesma 4.

[c] I have counted 1088 occurrences of דבר in the piel, and 45 other cases.

[d] Siebesma 4.

[e] Akkadian is a West-Semitic language, as is Hebrew, with similarities to Sumerian. Paul Mankowski (S.J.) has proposed that there may be more than 160 Akkadian loanwords in Biblical Hebrew (*Akkadian Loanwords in Biblical Hebrew*, Winona Lake, Indiana: Isenbrauns, 2000).

I. **The Arabic School.** Grammars written prior to 1812. Most of these are in Hebrew, Aramaic, or especially Arabic.[a] Primers were written in Latin and other European languages, but the grammars remained in the Semitic language world.

II. **The Phoenician / Ugaritic School.** Grammars written between 1813-1968 were influenced primarily by Gesenius-Kautzsch based on discoveries in Semitic languages such as Ugaritic by Mitchell Dahood and others. Many grammars written since 1968 are still greatly influenced by the scholarship Gesenius and Dahood.

III. **The Akkadian School.** Grammars written since 1968 have begun to be influenced in smaller or greater amounts by the work of Jenni based on new Semitic discoveries in Akkadian.

After researching several Hebrew grammars written especially in the latter two periods (see the bibliography) and commentaries by August Pieper, John F. Brug, Keil-Delitszch, Laetsch, Paul Raabe (of the LCMS), and H. C. Leupold, I have collated a list of more than thirty piel uses and examples, as well as different terms used by various authors to describe them.

The Piel in the Grammars and the Exegetes

The recent grammar of Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka (*A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Rome 1993) has one of the more thorough evaluations of the piel. In their opening statement about the piel, Joüon and Muraoka state:

> "The question how the function of piel in relation to other conjugations, notably qal, should be defined still remains one of the major challenges facing Hebrew and Semitic languages" (par. 52, p. 154-155).

In the Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar by Professor Kautzsch, the piel and its passive stem the pual are given just over four pages of analysis (§52 a-s, pp. 139-143). About half of this space deals with the formation of the piel and pual, but there are some good comments about the function of the piel:

> "The fundamental idea of piel…is *to busy oneself eagerly* with the action indicated by the stem. This intensifying idea of the stem…appears in individual cases as—(a) a *strengthening* and *repetition* of the action (cf. the *intensive* and *iterative* nouns with the middle radical strengthened, §84*b*)—(b) a *causative* sense (like hifil)… (c) Denominatives are frequently formed in this conjugation, and generally express a being occupied with the object expressed by the noun, either to form or to make use of it, e.g. *to make a nest, to nest*…" (p. 141-142)

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[a] For example, אשא משלי Saadiah Gaon (d. 942), a *responsum* by Hai Gaon (d. 1040), *Kitab al-Nutaf* by Spanish Grammarian Hayyuj (late 10th century), *Kitab al-Luma* and *Kitab al-Usul* by Ibn Janah (early 11th century), *Sefer Sahot* by Abraham Ibn Ezra (early 12th century), the exegetical and grammatical works of David Qimhi (1160-1235), and the books *Mikhlol, Shorashim* and *'Et Sopher* by Mishael ben Uzziel (13th century). Ben Uzziel's *Kitab al-Khilaf* is available online in Hebrew and English (ed. Lazar Lipschutz, Jerusalem, 1965).

The 1926 Hebrew Grammar by C.T. Wood and H.C.O. Lanchester (both of Cambridge) briefly states that "the piel usually expresses vigor or eagerness of action" (p. 72) but later adds that "the piel is frequently causative, especially in stative verbs; *e.g.*, 'he caused to learn,' *i.e.* taught." (p. 73).[a]

Quite a few grammars list a denominative use of the piel, meaning that such verbs "are derived from nouns" (*A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, C.L. Seow, 1987, p. 112). For example, God says that a priest (כֹּהֵן) "serves me as a priest" (לְכַהֲנוֹ־לִי, piel infinitive construct, Ex 28:1,3,4).

There are more: intensive action, a piel "without a primary qal," to do "eagerly," a strengthening, a repetition, iterative, causative, and denominative, etc.

We will set aside the Aramaic Pael and Peil, since their incidence is entirely limited to Daniel and Ezra. In the following chart, I have grouped books of the Bible into their traditional (i.e. non-JEDP) eras, using the Pentateuch and Joshua as Period 1 (1400-1250 BC),[b] the writing of Judges, Ruth, Samuel and books or Psalms by David, Solomon and Asaph (with Job) as Period 2 (1250-950 BC), Kings and early prophets as Period 3 (950-722 BC), and all other books as Period 4 (722-440 BC). Each period has also been given the name of its most famous or prolific writer.

The Development of Alternate Piel Stems in Biblical Hebrew

	Period 1 *Moses*[c]	Period 2 *David*	Period 3 *Isaiah*[d]	Period 4 *Jeremiah*[e]
Poel	10	19	18	15
Poal	-	3	5	2
Polel	7	69	23	47
Polal	-	7	-	2
Palel	-	2	-	2
Pilel	-	2	-	1
Pilal	-	1	-	-
Pulal	-	-	9	3
Pilpel	4	14	17	7
Pilpal	-	-	1	1
Polpal	-	-	1	-
Pe'al'al	-	2	-	2
Totals	21	119	74	82

[a] Also see Seixas, p. 29.

[b] The reason for including Joshua with Moses is that presumably they both learned their Hebrew in same way as boys in Egypt. However, no alternate piel-stems verbs occur in Joshua at all (see note 15).

[c] Includes Psalm 90, ascribed to Moses. 6 of the 21 forms are in Psalm 90. None are in Joshua at all.

[d] Early prophets: Includes Isaiah and the Minor Prophets from Hosea through Habakkuk. Obadiah has no D-stem forms apart from Piel and Pual.

[e] Late prophets: Includes Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets from Zephaniah to Malachi. Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Lamentations and Daniel are also counted in this group. Psalm 137, the only unquestionably late Psalm, has several piel verbs but no D-stems apart from the piel.

An examination of the chart above will attest that the piel stem was always in use throughout Biblical Hebrew. In fact, of the approximately 6500 occurrences of the piel or related stems (pual, poel, polal, etc.), about 14% are in the Psalms, 27% are in Moses (Genesis-Deuteronomy), and 21% in the Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel), But there is a pronounced difference when we look at stems related to the piel which are not piel or pual. Apart from these, there are a wide variety of additionally used D-Stem (a Ugaritic grammatical term) verbs in Biblical Hebrew. After a search of ten Hebrew Grammars, Rosenthal's Aramaic Grammar, and a Syriac Grammar[a] for comparison, I have compiled a list of the following uses for the piel, one of which applies to the pual and the other passives, and one that is more lexical than grammatical. Although the names are intended to be somewhat descriptive, a brief analysis of each of the uses seems in order.

Thirty-Three Uses of the Piel in Seven Main Categories

I. Intensive

1. Simple intensive
2. Showing respect (or disrespect)
3. Distributive
4. Idiomatic
5. Unexpected action
6. Strenuous, earnest, or violent action
7. Sexual action
8. Eager action
9. Quick, staccato action (*mihar*)

II. The piel reverses or inverts the qal meaning or use

10. Transitive of a qal intransitive
11. Intransitive of a qal transitive
12. Opposite, privative, or indelicate meaning
13. Literal of qal figurative
14. Figurative of qal literal
15. Profane of qal sacred

III. Declarative or forensic

16. Declarative

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[a] J.F. Coakley.

17. Forensic
18. Official statement
19. Marketplace valuation

IV. Iterative or characteristic

20. Multiple subjects in the same act
21. Multiple objects of the same act
22. Multiple occurrences of the same act
23. Habitual or naturally iterative action
24. Characteristic action
25. Frequent, repetitive, or uninterrupted action

V. The piel in place of another stem

26. Light   = qal
27. Reflexive   = nifal
28. Causative   = hifil
29. Pual in place of…   = qal passive

VI. Showing result or aim, or accomplished fact

30. Showing result or aim
31. Showing accomplished act ("aoristic")

VII. Denominative or diminutive

32. Denominative
33. Diminutive

I.
INTENSIVE PIEL

1) Simple intensive. This first use of the piel is often the best fit for many occurrences of the stem in both active and passive states. The qal of שָׁבַר can tell us that Joseph "broke open" the grain storehouse of Egypt (Gen 41:56), but in the piel, we learn that in Daniel's vision the goat with the big horn "shattered" (וַיְשַׁבֵּר) the horns of the ram (Dan 8:7). In this and many other cases, the piel simply intensifies the force of the verb that occurs in the qal. This does not

necessarily mean that the piel is based on the qal, but that both stems can show different aspects of the same root.

Another example is in Psalm 2:3, where נְנַתְּקָה "tear apart" is an intensification of the qal meaning, "draw away, pull up (by the roots)" (וּנְתַקְנֻהוּ, Jg 20:32). Intensive piel of נָתַק: Ps 107:14; Isa 58:6; Jer 2:20; Ezek 17:9; Nah 1:13.

2) Showing respect / disrespect. In some contexts, a subordinate or a person with an inferior status (social or otherwise) asks a superior to do something, and this is often expressed with a verb in the piel stem. Perhaps this is related to the causal use (see below). In the qal, שָׁלַח means "send, send away." When שָׁלַח is used to describe someone else being sent, it is typically in the qal. When שָׁלַח is used even in a cohortative sense, it remains in the qal (Dt 1:22). But when שָׁלַח is asked of oneself alone, it tends to fall into the piel stem, which would appear to be for the sake of showing respect. It generally falls into the piel when a subordinate or a respectful equal asks to be sent away or dismissed, such as when Abraham's servant asks Laban to let him go: "Send me (שַׁלְּחֻנִי) on my way to my master" (Gen 24:54).

An example of the piel showing disrespect might be found in 1 Sam 18:7, where the women are laughing (הַמְשַׂחֲקוֹת, piel fem ptc). Doubtless some of their laughter was genuine delight in David's accomplishment and the removal of the Philistine threat from the Valley of Elah, but it continued all the way to Saul's ears and turned into mockery: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands."

3) Distributive. The piel of זָרַע "scatter" (Isaiah 40:24) might be best described as an intensified version of the qal (Zechariah 2:2,4). Another example here might be when the qal חָפָה "cover" (Jer. 14:3) is used in the piel when the wood paneling of the temple and the holy place are covered or "overlaid" (וַיְחַפֵּהוּ) with gold (2 Chronicles 3:5; 3:8).

4) Idiomatic. Some Hebrew idioms are given in the piel without a definite semantic explanation. A common one is יְמַלֵּא "to fill the hand" (Lev 16:32). מָלֵא is a stative verb[a] and therefore takes no object, but in the piel it becomes an active, transitive verb (see below, "Piel Which Reverses or Inverts Qal Meaning or Usage). But this still doesn't explain why the idiom for ordination should be "to fill the hand." Perhaps the idea is that the priest's hands will be filled (with offerings) over and over again as he serves in the tabernacle. Since the idiom is not definite, it might be best to call this and other such cases the "idiomatic piel."

Another example here is the term יְחַיֶּה (piel imperfect from חָיָה, "live") meaning "restore" (1 Chronicles 11:8). The idiom is clear from context, but not from the word itself.

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[a] Weingreen 179-180.

A denominative piel (see below) that may also be idiomatic is the recurring participle מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת "aged three years" in Genesis 15:9. The three-year old may have been seen as the best of the offspring, but clearly the idiom is not perfectly understood by us.

5) Unexpected action. There is an element of surprise in some piel actions. Esau embraced (וַיְחַבְּקֵהוּ) Jacob (Gen 33:4) when a punch in the nose or worse was anticipated. The root חָבַק can mean the same thing in the qal (Eccl. 3:5; 2 Kings 4:16), and the Esau's embrace of his brother was no more or less emotional than would be the barren woman's promised miracle-baby (2 Kg 4:16). The unusual element with Esau was the unexpected quality of the context.

In Exodus 3:2, the bush Moses sees "did not burn up," אֵינֶנּוּ אֻכָּל, a most unexpected event! Typically fire consuming things is presented in the qal in BH, but here perhaps the unexpected nature of the event is stressed.[a]

The idea of sudden action is shown in the phrase "I will release the sword after them" (וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי, Jeremiah 9:15[16]). שָׁלַח generally means to "send," but in the case, the sword which was held back is suddenly released upon Judah.

6) Strenuous, Earnest or Violent action. Some actions are simply strenuous of themselves, and it is no surprise to have a term such as "be hard, severe" (qal stative קָשָׁה) brought into the piel וַתְּקַשׁ as Rachel undergoes a difficult childbirth (Gen 35:16). The stem נָתַק often takes a simple intensive meaning as we saw above ("break, tear up"). In Ezekiel 23:34, וְשָׁדַיִךְ תְּנַתֵּקִי "tear at your breasts" is certainly violent action. The unusual nature of this phrase is also highlighted by the object-verb word order.

Perhaps certain cases of earnest action, such as the prophet's prayer in Jonah 2:3(2:2) also falls into his category, although the root שָׁוַע only occurs in the piel stem, and so it is also a "light" use of the stem.

7) Sexual action. The Bible has few descriptions of sexual union apart from "he knew / lay with his wife" (NIV-11 "he made love to his wife") (qal, Genesis 4:25 etc.) and some cases of rape and other violent crimes (2 Sam. 13:14). One word for rape is the piel of עָנָה "humiliate, rape; ravish" (qal "be bowed down, become humble").[b] Rape must also be considered a violent act under the previous heading. Taking an example of marital sex, however, we have Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah in view of the window of King Abimelech (Gen 26:8). Moses' verb there is מְצַחֵק "play with, caress in a conjugal way." Since the root there is צָחַק (the root of

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[a] Not everyone agrees that the form אֻכָּל is a pual participle, but it is identified so in GK (52s) and in BDB p. 37. This difficulty in distinguishing qal passive participles and pual participles lies at the heart of the difficulty in counting the number of D-stem forms in the Bible.

[b] Another term from the verb עלל is used in the hithpael stem in Judges 19:25.

Isaac's own name), Moses' paronomasia is perhaps a way of saying that Isaac was living up to his name. Sex is for marriage, and sex is to be enjoyed (Isaac means "laughter").

Other potentially sexual verbs are found to be not sexual at all, such as the piel of אָהֵב "lover" but meaning "friend, ally" in context (Jer 22:20; Zech 13:6) or the pealal of the same root (Hosea 4:18). These should be considered characteristic piel uses (see below).

8) Eager action. This nuance of the intensive piel is especially suggested by the 1843 grammar by Beeston. He calls the piel "an intensive form of the [q]al signifying 'to do diligently'" (p. 22).[a] His example for formation of the piel uses the verb לְמַד, "to learn diligently," which is a good paradigm since it is a strong verb with no weak radicals. However, most of his forms are hypothetical since it only occurs in the qal, piel and pual. In addition, לָמַד is not an example of "diligent action" of the qal root word (to learn diligently), but rather an example of the piel being used for the causative hifil, since in the piel it means "to teach" as in לִמַּד Eccl. 12:9.

A better example of Beeston's "eager, diligent action" is קִוָּה in Jeremiah 14:19, "we waited eagerly for peace," and the same verb in Psalm 119:95, "The wicked are waiting eagerly to destroy me." See also the poetic contexts of Job 6:19; Ps 27:14; 37:34; 40:2; 56:7; Prov 20:22; Jer 8:15; 31:39.

Boiling, etc. Probably a sub-group of "eager action" but certainly belonging under "intensive action" is the act of baking or boiling. The verb בָּשַׁל in the qal means to cook when intransitive (Ezekiel 24:5) and to ripen when a qal transitive or hifil (Joel 4:13; Genesis 40:10). In the piel, it can simply intensify "cook" into "bake" or "roast" (2 Samuel 13:8) or it can mean "to boil," certainly an active, intense and bubbling word in both the piel (1 Samuel 2:13) and pual (1 Samuel 2:15).

9) Quick, Stacatto Activity (*Mihar*). The Hebrew verb *mahar* (מהר, Esther 6:10) means "to hurry, hasten," and this idea appears to carry into a whole series of piel occurrences (1 Chron. 12:9, "swift").

The difficult opening clause of Isaiah 38:14 has the prophet comparing his weeping to the "chirp" (אֲצַפְצֵף) of a songbird (whether a thrush or swallow is not easy to say—the translation of bird names is a difficult area of Hebrew studies). Obviously, this is not meant to be a happy twittering, but perhaps a repetitious, staccato sobbing is meant. There is also the act of the prostitute commanded to "play the harp" (נַגֵּן, touch the strings) in Isaiah 23:16. Some grammars would probably call this the piel showing the completion of an action, but since it is a command and not an historical record being carried out, it is my opinion that the piel simply requests the playing, typically a rapid (though not necessarily virtuosic) activity.

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[a] Beeston uses the spelling 'Kal.'

Grammars on the Intensive Piel:
Beeston, *Hieronymian Hebrew* (1843) p. 22; Harper (1886) p. 68; Horsnall p. 98; Joüon and Muraoka p. 151; Pratico and VanPelt p. 307; Seow p. 112; Weingreen p. 141; Wood and Lanchester p. 72.

II.
PIEL WHICH REVERSES OR INVERTS QAL MEANING OR USAGE

Sometimes the piel transforms a verb's meaning by presenting the opposite (or otherwise modified) meaning of the qal or nifal stem. This can involve whether or not a verb is transitive, to be taken literally, figuratively, or a variety of other possibilities.[a]

10) Transitive of qal intransitive. One of the earliest exegetes to recognize differing forces in piel stems was August Pieper of our own fellowship. His mention of a transitive piel is almost an aside, noting the fact of the matter but not pausing to comment further: "The verb *yekabbennah*, from *kābhāh*, to go out, expire, echoes the sound of *kēhāh*. In Isaiah 43:17 and 66:24 this verb occurs in the Qal as an intransitive; here and in 1:31 it is a Piel and transitive" (*Isaiah II* p. 181).

Examples of transitive piels with intransitive qal forms:

כָּלָה "finish." Intransitive qal: one's eyesight might "finish" or fail (Jeremiah 14:6 עֵינֵיהֶם כָּלוּ). But Moses can use the transitive piel וַיְכַל to tell us that God "finished" his work of creating and use as his direct object מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה "the work (which he did)," Genesis 2:2.[b]

Many of the occurrences of the piel שָׂמַח "rejoice" are intensive forms similar in force to the qal. There is one hifil of this verb, Psalm 89:43 "make glad." But a few of the piel instances seem to be transitive, in which someone causes or gives joy in another. In Isaiah 56:7, the Lord brings and gives joy (וְשִׂמַּחְתִּים) to the foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord.[c]

שָׁנָה "change," intransitive qal ("I the LORD do not change," Mal 3:6) but transitive piel. "Change your ways" (לְשַׁנּוֹת) Jer 2:36. "Changed (וַיְשַׁנֶּהָ) her ['advanced'] to the best place in the harem" (Esther 2:9).

Also note that some verbs without a qal can fall into this category:

נִחַם "regret" is of course passive, sometimes approaching a middle voice in the nifal ("Relent, and do not bring disaster on your people," Ex 32:12). It takes on an active, transitive voice in the

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[a] Cf. Lily Kahn's *Grammar of Eastern European Hasidic Hebrew Tale* (2015), especially her analysis of non-standard transitive qal (p 218) and non-standard intransitive hifil (p. 233-234).

[b] A separate study might show that the presence of the piel drives the LXX translation to make choices between virtually identical verbs such as τελέω "finish" (Ruth 3:18; Gal 5:17; 1 Macc 13:10; Sir 38:27) and συντελέω "finish" (Gen 2:2; Job 14:14; Rom 9:28; Sir 38:30).

[c] This bringing of Gentiles into the family of God is the context of the stinging passage Jesus quotes to condemn the money changers: "It is written: My house will be a house of prayer, but you have made it 'a den of robbers.'" Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:18; Luke 19:46.

piel. נִחַמְתָּ֫נִי "You have given me comfort," Ruth 2:13. Cp. Gen 5:29; Isa 12:1, and of course נַחֲמ֥וּ נַחֲמ֖וּ, Isaiah 40:1, "Comfort, comfort my people."

   I have counted 15 occurrences of this piel use in Leviticus: 5:21; 5:22; 6:21 (2x); 8:15; 8:30; 8:31; 8:33; 9:17; 14:48; 16:20; 19:9; 23:22; 26:16 and 26:44. See also Ruth 2:12; 2:21; 3:3 and 3:18.

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Grammar and commentary on transitive piel:
Pratico (308); Pieper *Isaiah II* p. 181, 363-364

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   11) Intransitive of qal transitive. Not nearly as common as the preceding, it does happen that sometimes a transitive qal verb is presented in the piel in an intransitive sense. In Jeremiah 13:19, the cities of the Negev "will be shut up," pual perfect (סֻגְּרוּ). Although the pual stem shows the passive of the qal, the context shows that those shut doors are unable to be opened, so the verb might be taken as a stative or intransitive of what it clearly a qal transitive verb.

   Another example here might be in Judges 5:11, where the piel participle מְחַצְצִ֫ים means "divisions (of singers)." The qal of this verb can also mean "divisions" in a quasi-military sense (divisions or ranks of locusts, Prov 30:27).

   (12) Opposite, privative or (possibly) indelicate meaning. In some cases, the piel allows a verb to take the opposite meaning from the qal or even from other instances of the piel (a rare but fascinating phenomenon, as with the English "cleave"). In the qal, סָקַל means to stone (put to death by throwing stones, 1 Kings 21:13). But in the piel (e.g. וַיְסַקְּלֵהוּ, Isaiah 5:2) it means to "remove stones." A more dogmatically significant case is the difference between the qal חָטָא "miss the mark, sin" (Exodus 32:31) and the piel וְחִטְּאוֹ "remove sin; purify" (Numbers 19:19). In his Psalms commentary, Mitchell Dahood refers to this type of piel as "privative."[a]

   This force of the piel explains the classic instance of Job's wife, who takes the (light) piel "bless" (בָּרַךְ) and uses it with the clearly negative and opposite meaning בָּרֵךְ "curse" in Job 2:9.

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Grammars: Blau (52), Gesenius-Kautzsch (142), Harper (68), Horsnell (98),
Joüon and Muraoka (p. 156, 159) and Meyerowitz (23).

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   (13) Literal of qal figurative. Some qal verbs have a figurative or technical meaning, where the piel permits a more literal sense to be understood. For example, the qal כָּסָה means to conceal concepts such as shame or knowledge, or to cover over sin. In the piel, the verb takes on the more literal meaning of covering something up. For example, in Genesis 9:23 Moses says וַיְכַסּ֗וּ אֵ֚ת עֶרְוַ֣ת אֲבִיהֶ֔ם, "and they covered the nakedness of their father" (piel, vc imperfect).

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[a] Commenting on Psalm 68:20 (English 68:19), *Anchor Bible: Psalms* Vol. II p. 143-144.

The qal יָסַד typically means "to establish," but usually of something quite vast: a deserted city (for wild animals), the founding of the second temple, or the firmament, or the earth itself (Isaiah 51:13). But in Haggai 2:18 the pual refers to the laying of the physical foundation of the second Temple, not the whole complex.

(14) Figurative of qal literal. The verb אָכַל "to eat" never occurs in the Piel in BH, but the pual appears twice.[a] In Isaiah 1:20, the pual תְּאֻכְּלוּ "you will be devoured (by the sword)" is a figurative use of a verb that is almost always literal in the qal stem.

In Haggai 2:7, the verb מָלֵא "fill" (usually lilteral) is used in a figurative sense, "to fill this house with glory."

(15) Profane of Qal sacred. This seems to be more common in later Hebrew. In the qal or hifil, קטר is to make a sacrifice to the Lord (Lev. 8:16, etc.). When the verb occurs in the piel, it is invariably a heathen or profane offering being made, as in Jeremiah 1:16 "burning incense to other gods," Jeremiah 7:9 "burn incense to Baal," and so on. A similar example might be found in the verb כָּסָה, "let our disgrace cover us," Jeremiah 3:25, although that can also be taken a case of a piel literal (see no. 13 above). Many piels can be covered by more than one use.

III.
DECLARATIVE

(16) Declarative (cf. qidesh TLOT p. 1105 chart). The qal of אָשַׁר means to go straight ahead or advance (Prov 9:6). Sometimes the piel carries the same basic meaning. Other times, the piel means to bless, such as in Malachi 3:12 "all the nations will call you blessed." This is the declarative force of the piel. Another example is in Genesis 30:13, where Leah is pleased by the birth of her maid servant's second son and proclaims her own happiness (אִשְּׁרוּנִי).

The common term שָׁבַח "praise" (שַׁבְּחוּהוּ, Ps 117:1 etc.) may naturally be found in the piel stem because it declares praise. But it affects some NT passages. The Greek αἰνέω is fairly common in Homer both as αἰνέω and αἰνίζομαι (*Iliad* XIII 373, *Odyssey* VII 487, etc.). It also turns up in the LXX (Ps 145:1 (Eng. 146:1); Ezr. 3:10; Ne 12:24) and in Luke 19:37. But the intensified form ἐπαινέω is far more common,[b] and it is the translation of passages like Ps. 117:1 (ἐπαινεσάτωσαν, Romans 15:11).[c]

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[a] Exodus 3:2; Isaiah 1:20. Both of these could be argued to be qal passives.

[b] 3 Macc 4:16; 4 Macc 4:4; Sirach Prologue 1:3; 1Cor 11:22, etc. Ἐπαινέω is also probably the root of the name Epenetus (Romans 16:5).

[c] Ἐπαινέω is also the preferred term in the Fathers: 1 Clem 33:6; Ign Mag 12; Ign Smy 5:2; M. Pol 4; Barnabas 11:9; Herman Sim 9,22,2.

According to Leupold,[a] the verb כָּלָה has a declarative force in Genesis 2:2, "On the seventh day God had finished (וַיְכַל) the work he had been doing." Luther goes into a lengthy discussion about this word in his Genesis lectures (LW Volume 1), since it could be argued that God continued working in many ways after the seventh day of creation.[b] But the work of the creation week was completed; declared to be finished by God.

(17) Forensic. When Lamech named his son Noah ("comfort"), he prophesied about the child: "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed" (Gen. 5:29). In his prophecy, Lamech uses the piel perfect אֵרְרָהּ "cursed," expressing God's forensic declaration on his creation because of the fall into sin.

Another example here might be the husband's declaration "you are beautiful" (נָאווּ), Song of Solomon 1:10. Although a subjective observation, he makes the declaration as the judgment of his eyes and heart.

(18) Official statement. Sometimes the difference between forms of certain verbs, such as "kill," occur in the qal, piel, and hifil. Is there a nuance to any of these? In Esther 8:11, the Jews are permitted by King Xerxes to "destroy" (וּלְאַבֵּד, piel infinitive construct), "any armed force of any nationality or province that might attack them." While this could be an iterative use of the piel, it also seems to fall under the heading of a piel in an official statement, a government edict, with the understanding that it means "by any means available and to the fullest extent of the law."

(19) Marketplace valuation. Passages like Leviticus 25:27 suggest that the piel was used for a marketplace estimate, a use which might also fall under "aim" below (no. 30). The Lord commands the priests to assess the value (וְחִשַּׁב) of land based on how many years it has been or will be used. Another case might be Lamentations 4:2, "worth (הַמְסֻלָּאִים) their weight in gold."

IV.
ITERATIVE

The grammars agree that the piel can show "repeated or habitual action or an action that is characteristic of a person" (Steinmann 119). This observation of the piel's repetitive use might be more helpful to the exegete if it were broken down into several sub-categories that show a whole spectrum of possibilities.

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[a] In connection with the declarative piel of כָּלָה in Genesis 2:2, Leupold (*Genesis* p. 102) cites several other examples, including טִהֵר "to declare clean" (Lev. 13:6-14:48) and טִמֵּא "to declare unclean" (Lev. 13:8; 20:25).
[b] The Father's work of divine providence continues permanently, and the Lord's mercy endures forever.

(20) **Multiple subjects**. The verb נָשַׁךְ means "to bite" in both the qal (Numbers 21:9) and the piel (Numbers 21:6), with serpents or vipers able to do the biting in either stem. The reason for the piel in Numbers 21:6 would appear to be that multiple snakes were biting the people—a case of multiple subjects, although we would understand from the context that there were probably also multiple objects and multiple occurrences.

When the women of all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, they did not laugh together as a group, but women from each town laughed as the saw Saul trying to ride proudly by: הַמְשַׂחֲקוֹת 1 Samuel 18:7. The NIV says that they "sang" this, but the verb and the context imply that they were mocking him. This could be a case of multiple subjects, and as we shall see, of multiple occurrences as well. In fact, there are many occasions where piel verbs take on more than one use.

Another example here is probably the polel imperfect יְקוֹמֵם "(my people) have risen up," Micah 2:8.

Grammars:
Horsnell p. 98n. Joüon & Muraoka p. 155.

(21) **Multiple objects**. In Nehemiah 8:10, the celebrating Jews are commanded to send (וְשִׁלְחוּ piel imperative) "portions of food" to those who had nothing prepared, and as they carry out the order we find a case of multiple objects: "Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and celebrate with great joy, because now they understood the words that had been made known to them" (Nehemiah 8:12), a picturesque illustration of a similar food shelf project as a continuous, ongoing activity in a church (or community) rather than a one-time feel-good project.

Professor Kautzsch describes the typical use of the verb "recount" (וַיְסַפֵּר, Genesis 24:66) as being "intensive and iterative" (p. 141).[a] Piel verbs that emphasize the presence of multiple objects are fairly common, with many examples in Genesis.[b]

In 1 Kings 11:15 the piel verb קָבַר; (qal "to bury" as in Genesis 23:4) means to bury many, when Joab went to Edom "to bury (לְקַבֵּר) the dead."

In Daniel 2:14, the commander of the king's guard is sent out to kill (לְקַטָּלָה, pael infinitive, the Aramaic equivalent of piel[c]) the astrologers. The pael does not mean a particularly vicious death in store for the wise men of Babylon, but is simply a verb with multiple objects.

קִבֵּץ "gather" in the piel often refers to gathering scattered peoples (Zephaniah 3:19,20).

Multiple objects:
Blau (52), Gesenius-Kautzsch (141), Horsnell (98n), and Joüon & Muraoka (155).

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[a] Cp. Genesis 24:66; 29:13; 37:9; 37:10; 40:8; 40:9; 41:8; 41:12.
[b] For example, Genesis 6:17; 7:19,20; 15:10,13; 16:6; 25:6.
[c] Recall that in Aramaic, peal is the qal equivalent, pael the piel equivalent, and hafel the hifil equivalent.

(22) Multiple occurrences / actions, or to make permanent. In Genesis 44:12, the Egyptian steward "searches" (וַיְחַפֵּשׂ), and this is a description of multiple searches "beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest." The iterative or frequentative use of the piel is clear from the context, but the task is also exegetically reinforced by the use of the piel stem.

A homiletic application of the iterative piel is found in 2 Kings 2:12, where Elisha cries out, "My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" In the qal, צָעַק means "cry, cry out" (1 Kings 20:39, where the prophet calls out once to the king), but Elisha's action is described with the piel, and the iterative or repeating force seems to be the only likely exegetical use. The multiplicity of the action is also supported by the fact that the piel verb is also a participle: מְצַעֵק. So we have there a picture of Elisha crying out again and again in his grief at Elijah's passing. Rather than hired mourners going about to announce the death of a great man, Elisha took the task on himself, not wanting to demean Elijah's departure with a hired messenger.

Grammars:
Gesenius-Kautzsch (141), Harper (68), Horsnell (98n), Joüon & Muraoka (155), Seow (112).

(23) Habitual act or naturally iterative action. An example here is surely the verb כָּבַס, "to wash, wash by treading." The qal is only used of the washer (fuller) who does the stomping (2 Kings 18:17; Isaiah 7:3; 36:2),[a] but the piel is almost always used for the action of stomping on clothes or slapping them repeatedly into a shallow water source (Lev. 6:27; 11:25,28,40; 13:6; 13:34; 13:54,58 (bis); 14:8,47; 15:5,6,7,8,10,11,13,15,17,21,22,27; 16:26,28; 17:15).[b]

Another naturally repetitious or iterative action is the butchery required for sacrifice. The worshiper was required to cut up a sanctified animal into pieces. The full phrase is found several times in Leviticus (1:6; 1:12, etc.): וְנִתַּח אֹתָהּ לִנְתָחֶיהָ, using the cognate accusative "pieces" as the result of the repeated cutting (וְנִתַּח, piel waw-consecutive perfect from נָתַח). It would be an effective illustration to talk about the Israelite cutting the animal into cuttings or trimming it into trimmings. The action is repetitive, cutting this and cutting that, over and over, until the work is finished.

Grammars:
Gesenius-Kautzsch (141), Harper (68), Horsnell (98n), Joüon & Muraoka (155), Seow (112).

(24) Characteristic act. A characteristic of birds is that they are "the ones who fly" (יְעוֹפֵף, Genesis 1:20). It is characteristic of sorcerers that "they practice sorcery" (וְלַמְכַשְּׁפִים, Daniel 2:2). It is characteristic of refiners that they "refine" (מְצָרֵף, Malachi 3:2).

Also, note the exegetical significance in Jeremiah 3:8, where the Lord has given "faithless Israel" a certificate of divorce. Why? For one indiscretion? No, it is because נִאֵפָה, she has committed adultery again and again, to the point where it is her sinful characteristic.

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[a] An exception is Malachi 3:2, where the piel participle is used for the fuller, perhaps because it is an example of a late idiom, or by attraction to the piel מְצָרֵף "refiners" earlier in the verse.

[b] See also Jeremiah 4:14.

An especially significant case is in Isaiah 40:9, מְבַשֶּׂרֶת, the "one who bears good news" to Zion. The participial form serves as a noun (vocative and adjectival), but the piel brings a special force: "It is not a onetime act…but an uninterruptedly continuing exercise and therefore a customary, a natural, professional activity" (Pieper Isaiah II p. 102). This is the continuous proclamation of the good news of the gospel.

<p style="text-align:center">Grammar:</p>

<p style="text-align:center">Pratico (308), Joüon & Muraoka mention (155); and also note Pieper *Isaiah II* p. 102.</p>

(25) Frequent, repetitious or uninterrupted action. The remnant seeking (בִּקְשׁוּ) food in the ruins of Jerusalem (Lam 1:19) is an example of repetitious action.[a] Another example here is the repetitive chirping of birds or hooting (יְשׁוֹרֵר) of owls in the darkness in Zephaniah 2:14.

A storytelling example of repetitious action is the unloading of the camels brought by Abraham's servant to Laban (Genesis 24:32). The qal of פָּתַח is "to open," but a camel isn't unloaded by opening only one sack. The piel וַיְפַתַּח tells us that the various saddlebags of the animals were opened one after another as they were gradually unloaded.

<p style="text-align:center">Grammars:</p>

<p style="text-align:center">Pratico (308), Joüon & Muraoka "the frequency of an action" (155).</p>

<p style="text-align:center">V.
PIEL IN PLACE OF ANOTHER STEM</p>

(26) Light (= qal). When a verbal root does not occur in the qal, the piel tends to show the basic meaning of a word, which might occur in some of the other stems, but might not. In such a case, the piel assumes the "light" stem for the verb.

This is especially evident in two verbs, דבר; and צוה, as in אֲצַוְּךָ תְּדַבֵּר, "say whatever I command you," Jeremiah 1:7. Both verbs have their ordinary or "light" forms in the piel rather that in the qal (although דבר does sometimes occur in the qal). These two roots, דבר; and צוה, account for 24% of all piel verbs in Biblical Hebrew.[b] Professor Eickmann referred to the piel דבר as denominative (see VII below).[c] Ex.: "God said to Moses…" (Ex. 6:2).

Other examples: מִגֵּן "deliver" (Genesis 14:20), מְשֻׁלָּשׁ "be third, divide in three" (Genesis 15:9), וַיְבַתֵּר "cut in two" (Genesis 15:10), וַתְּעַר "empty, lay bare" (Genesis 24:20), חִלֵּל

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[a] Interestingly, the LXX translates בָּקְשׁוּ there with the simple verb ἐζήτησαν, but an augmented verb, ἐκζητέω, is frequently used in the NT (Lk 11:50-51; Ac 15:17; Rom 3:11; 1 Tim 1:4; Heb 11:6; Heb 12:17. Cp. Judith 8:21; Baruch 3:23; Ep. Jer 1:6. In the Fathers: 1 Clem. 8:4; 13:1; 14:5; 35:5; Polycarp 2:1; Barn. 2:1; 2:5; Did 4:2; Hv 3,3,5; 3,9,5, etc.

[b] A rough count has found 1088 instances of the piel of דבר and 496 instances of צוה, which add up to 1584 out of the (approximately) 6557 piel and related D-stem verbs in the Old Testament.

[c] Eickmann, Paul, *Hebrew 461 Summary of Forms and Syntax* (NWC 1995) p. 25.

"defile" (1 Chr. 5:1; Zephaniah 3:4). Also, the pual עֻפְּלָה ("he is puffed up," Hab. 2:4) is a rare verb, only occurring in the pual and the hifil.

<div align="center">Grammar:
Horsnell (99).</div>

(27) Reflexive (= nifal). The Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament suggests that the verb כָּחַשׁ "deceive" in in the piel should be taken as reflexive (1 Kings 13:18; Zech. 13:4). I see it more as declarative, especially as this is seen in the New Testament and Apostolic Fathers where the LXX translation ἀρνέομαι is used[a] and in such passages as 1 John 2:23, that God is denied when Christ is denied.

(28) Causative (= hifil). Some verbs do not occur in the hifil but use the piel to express cause. Pieper acknowledges this in his *Isaiah II* commentary in passing (p. 363). The first piel verb in the lexicon, אָבַד, means "perish" in the qal,[b] but "cause to perish" in the piel (cf. Jeremiah 15:7; Eccl. 7:7; Zeph. 2:13).

In the case of the stative verb חָיָה "to live," there is both a causative piel and a causative hifil. In many contexts, the piel seems to have a causative or even permissive force (מְחַיֶּה "allowed, permitted to live" Nehemiah 9:6) rather than the stative of the qal "to live." "The pi[el] and hi[fil], both with the meaning 'to keep a live, let live,' are distinct in that the pi[el] places grater emphasis upon the contrast to 'to die, be dead,' while the hi[fil] expresses the weakened concept of 'duration'" (Gerleman, TLOT Vol I p 414).

Qal עָנָה is active "cower" (Isaiah 31:4) or stative "be afflicted" (Ps 119:67), but the piel is typically causative (Genesis 15:13; 16:6; Numbers 24:24). No hifil or hofal of this verb occurs, although all the other stems do.

A good example of a causative piel when there is already a useful hifil form is Ezekiel 1:24-25. The cherubim moving with the wheel in Ezekiel's vision have wings with are spread out and noisy, "like the roar of rushing waters, like the voice of the Almighty; like the tumult of an army" (Ezek 1:24). However, "When they stood still, they lowered their wings." The word "lowered" is תְּרַפֶּינָה, the piel imperfect of רָפָה. The regular hifil meaning of רָפָה is to "be still" (Psalm 46:11, "Be still, and know that I am God"). The causative piel implies a more complex action than just to stop fighting. Perhaps the folding of wings, often as intricate and beautiful as a ballet, is the reason for the piel stem in such cases as this.

(29) Pual sometimes used rather than qal passive. There is some dispute about the qal passive. In some cases, the MT is unclear as to whether certain forms are puals or qal passives. In other cases, there is a debate as to whether certain verbs which have a qal exhibit a qal

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[a] Wisdom 16:16; 17:9; 2 Clement 3:1; 17:7; Ign. Magnesians 9:2; Ign. Smyrnaeans 5:1; MPol 9:2; Diognetus 7:7; Hv 2,2,7-8; 2,3,4; 2,4,2; Hs 9,26,6; 9,28,4; 9,28,7; 9,28,8.
[b] Joshua 23:13; Joel 1:11; Jonah 4:10; Micah 4:9; 7:2.

passive, but simply use the pual (passive) instead. Van der Merwe says that "the pual is in all respects the passive of the piel,"[a] yet there are a number of verbs which seem to take their passive forms in the pual rather than the qal passive. One of the these might be the burst (וּמְבֻקָּעִים, pual participle) wineskins of Joshua 9:4.

The qal active רָחַץ "wash" (Lev 8:21) in the passive becomes the pual רֻחָץ "be washed" (Prov 30:12). Also, the qal מָרַק means to "scour, polish" (Jer. 46:4; 2 Chr. 4:16). In Leviticus 6:21, the passive "be scoured" occurs (וּמֹרַק), probably a pual rather than a qal passive.

Some of these instances are disputed. Professor Kautzsch cites a German grammarian (Böttcher, *Ausführliches Lehrbuch*, para. 904 ff. and 1022 ff.) and Ibn Ganah, an ancient Arab scholar, who suggested that "many supposed perfects of pual are in reality passives of qal." The roots he specifies are אכל, חפש, טרף, ילד, יצר, לקח, עבד, שגל, שטף and שפך.[b]

Some pual forms are disputed by more scholars than these, particularly forms such as לֻקַּח ("be taken away" Gen 3:23; Jg 17:2; 2 Kg 2:10; Isa 52:5, 53:8), which could be either a qal passive or a pual. Additional examples include Zech 11:2,3 (also Nahum 3:7) שֻׁדְּדוּ "be destroyed."

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Grammar: Gesenius (p. 141 n.)
Commentary: Pieper *Isaiah II* p. 363.

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VI.
FACTITIVE (RESULTATIVE; AORISTIC)

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(30) "Resultative," Showing aim or endeavor

Professor Paul Eickmann used the term factitive in his explanation a piel use in his *Hebrew 461* notes (1995, page 25).

We find factitive uses of the stem especially in the poel and polel stems. In the words of Van der Merwe, "The qal may describe the verb as a process that occurs, while the piel describes the result of that process" (p. 80).

Some grammars have tried to draw a distinction between a piel showing aim and a factitive piel, but the definition of factitive is "emphasizing the natural or intended end or result of an action," which does not seem to be significantly different from a piel showing aim or endeavor. Jenni calls these "durative statives," expressing a quality peculiar to a person or thing, although I have transferred that distinction to a "characteristic piel" above (no. 25).

Several time in Amos 1-2, the verb שָׁלַח "send" is used by God to show his judgment on the unrepentant. In the Septuagint, this is translated ἐξαποστελῶ, "I am sending out," which in the

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[a] Van der Merwe p. 82.

[b] Barth added עָשֹׂה, עֹזב, נפח, כרת, חצב, זנה, בזז, אסר, and ראה. Barth also wanted to add all lamed-gutterals with ר for the second radical: הרג, הרה, זרה, זרע, טרף (already mentioned by Ibn Ganah), מרט, קרא, and שרף. Cf. Gesenius p. 141n.

New Testament has the idea of "sending far away" (Acts 22:21). In Amos, it is the act of sending fire that draws out the piel stem (Amos 1:4; 1:7; 1:10; 1:12; 2:2; 2:5), but when God promises to send a famine of the word of God, the prophet reverts to the hifil (Amos 8:11). The earlier examples all seem to be that of God's aim (punishment for God's enemies), whereas the last example is that of God chastising his people in order to bring them to repentance.

The sea can be "split" in the qal (בָּקַעְתָּ, Nehemiah 9:11), yet the piel shows that the action is done with a particular aim in mind, as in Genesis 22:3: "He split וַיְבַקַּע the wood for a sacrifice."

An example of this sense of the piel stem occurs in the beginning of Obadiah. In verse 1, an envoy is "sent" (שֻׁלַּח) to the nations to proclaim God's judgment on Edom; the aim of the sending is the act of proclaiming. However, just a little later in verse 7, the same verb (שִׁלְּחוּךָ) seems to fall under a different piel use, the "accomplished result" (see 31 below).

In Genesis 7:3, God commands Noah to enter the ark with "to live" (חָיָה) as the goal (לְחַיּוֹת, piel infinitive construct). Surely this is the infinitive of purpose, but the piel stem seems to support the verbal form. Noah will not personally "cause" or "permit" the animals and people aboard the ark to survive (such is God's task, not Noah's), but to "keep them alive." This is the piel showing aim or purpose. This phenomenon is attested to by Goetze with the Akkadian verb *iblut* 'he lived,' which become 'he made to live' in the D-stem (piel equivalent).

The piel serves this purpose in Genesis 12:12. As Abram's fear gets the better of him, his emotions turn to an intensive piel verb as he tells his beautiful wife "they will kill me but will let you live" (יְחַיּוּ, piel imperfect חָיָה). The Patriarch is afraid, and this could explain the piel all by itself simply as an intensive, emotional stem, but in addition to this Abram knows that the Egyptians will not "cause" Sarai to live, but rather they will "permit" her to live—the piel showing aim.

(31) Emphasizing accomplished act; "Aoristic piel"   With regard to result, the Assyriologist A. Goetze observed that the G-stem (qal) usually refers to the completion of an action, whereas the D-stem (piel) emphasizes the result of the completed action.[a] The "force/send" in Obadiah 7 (see שִׁלְּחוּךָ in no. 31 above) fits this description.

The piel of נָפַץ (II) "scatter" can be an intensive, distributive or violent action, but it also expresses the fact of the action: "You dash them to pieces" (Psalm 2:9). The qal of נָפַץ (II) "scatter" seems to indicate more of a general dispersal, a "scattering," as in 1 Samuel 13:11, "When I saw that the men were scattering (i.e. like fragments from a smashed jar?]." The piel can intensify the meaning.

Daniel 12:7 is a special case. Here two piel verbs are placed together to show completeness: "When the power of the holy ones has been finally broken…." Both וּכְכַלּוֹת and נַפֵּץ are piel infinitives. וּכְכַלּוֹת "to be complete, finished," and נַפֵּץ "to be shattered." The inseparable

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[a] Cited by Siebesma, p. 7.

preposition -כְּ governs both verbs in a temporal clause, translated with "when." The piel stem in tells us that the thoroughness, the accomplished fact, is emphasized in Daniel's mind. This is not necessarily a violent act, but could be accomplished by other means, although many people have been led to believe that persecution is a physically violent action, as when the disciples were thinking of defending themselves: "See, Lord, here are two swords," Luke 22:38. But persecution comes in many forms.

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Grammars:

Blau (52), Horsnell (98; 127 n.27), Joüon & Muraoka (155), Pratico (307-8),

Seow (112), Steinmann (116-117), Van der Merwe (80-81).

Grammars also call this the "resultative piel."

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VII.
DENOMINATIVE

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(32) Denominative piel. A noun brought into the piel stem which uses the act of the noun as a verb. לְכַהֵן refers to a priest who "priests" (serves as priest), Ex 29:1; Lev 5:13; Nu 3:3; 1 Chr 29:2; more than 25x in the Pentateuch). This usage might explain why John retains the nominative as object of the infinitive in a clause like ἔσονται ἱερεῖς "they will serve as priests" in Rev 20:6, as a Hebraism reflecting a denominative piel based on this regular use of the piel in so many passages in Exodus and Leviticus.[a]

Many grammars that some verbs in the piel stem appears to be derived from a noun or adjective, which makes the verbal action simple (not intensive). "These…often indicate not emphasis, but merely that the verb is derived from a noun whose meaning is more basic to the root idea."[b]

This is an observation that should be made about a verb that clearly appears long after a noun has been established, so not all denominatives mentioned by grammars or lexicons are necessarily denominative in fact. For example, in English, "to fellowship" is a relatively recent denominative verb (this writer first heard it used in 1997), where "fellowship" is a noun with a very long history.

The piel עָנַן means "to bring clouds" (the noun is עָנָן; they are used together in Genesis 9:14). It is certainly denominative. But there is a poel form, עֹנְנֵיכֶם, which is characteristic in meaning, and is translated "a soothsayer" (NASB) or "medium" (EHV) (= a cloud-bringer, Jeremiah 27:9).

The familiar noun כֹּהֵן (priest) is used to form the verb כָּהַן "serve as a priest" in especially in

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[a] A true Greek denominative, ἱερατεύειν, can be found in Luke 1:8 and throughout the LXX (Lev 7:35; 2 Chr 31:19), but not in every place that the denominative occurs in the Pentateuch. However, ἱερατεύειν appears again in some of the Apocryphal books (1 Esdras 5:39, 8:45; 1 Maccabees 7:5; Ecclesiasticus 45:15). Cp. λατρεύειν 1 Clement 43:3.

[b] R.L. Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Harris, Archer & Waltke) Vol I p. 453, entry on כפר "atonement."

Exodus (28:1,3,4; 29:1; 29:44; 30:30; 31:10; 35:19; 39:41) and Leviticus (7:35; 16:32).[a] In this case and perhaps with all denominatives, the meaning of the noun is emphasized as the labor presented by the verb.

In Psalm 18:19 [English 18:18] יְקַדְּמוּנִי, "confronted" is denominative piel from קָדַם, "be in front." The noun קָדָם, means "east, front." In Psalm 89:14, the piel קִדֵּם means "fronted, went before." Cp. Psalm 79:8, "meet;" Psalm 88:13 "come before," etc.

(33) Diminutives from nouns in the piel. This is the rarist, most iffy and probably most objectionable category, but it was suggested in one grammar. Certain participles in the pual or pealal become diminutive or even contemptuous ("reddish," "blackish," "rabble"). "Ram skins dyed red" (מְאָדְּמִים   Ex 25:5). Perhaps the red shields of Nahum 2:4 (Engl. 2:3, מְאָדָּם   "rubbed with ruddle") as well. Most or all of these examples could simply be subsumed under regular uses of the participle as an adjective.

A word that may belong here is *mashugga* מְשֻׁגָּע   "crazy, behave like a madman." This is a word always used with contempt. There are five instances,[b] and the word also occurs in the hithpael (1 Sam 21:15). Whether it derives from בַּשִּׁגָּעוֹן "madness" (Zech 12:4) or is some ל"ע intensification (a piea'a?) of שָׁנָה "go astray" (Lev 4:13) would require more intensive study.

Grammars and Commentary:
Blau (52), Gesenius-Kautzsch (141), Harper (68),
Steinmann (118-119). Anchor Bible: Ruth, p. 72

AN ADDITIONAL DISCOVERY

Besides the various uses of the piel and its related stems, I made a discovery while researching this paper which is worth noting. It has to do with the Graf-Wellhausen theory of the development of the Old Testament Canon, which asserts that the historical Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch and proposes that those books were edited together by a Jawist, Elohist, Deuteronomist and Priestly editor or editors sometime after the return from captivity under Ezra and Nehemiah.

A study of the appendices of this paper show the use and in some ways the development of the alternate D-stem forms related to the piel. In Chart 1 (p. 24), we see that of the 1812 D-stems occurring the writings of Moses (the Pentateuch and Psalm 90), 1791 are either piel or pual verbs (98.8%). Only 21 are not, and of these, all are either poel, polel or pilpel verbs. A natural conclusion here is that the piel, pual, poel, polel and pilpel were in use in early Hebrew (Moses' time), but the other seven D-stems were quite probably unknown or even uncoined prior to 1400

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[a] Also: Num 3:4; Dt 10:6; 1 Chr 5:36; 1 Chr 24:2; 2 Chr 11:14; Isa 61:10; Hos 4:6.
[b] Dt 28:32; 1 Sam 21:16; 2 Kg 9:11; Jer 29:26; Hos 9:7

BC (Moses died in 1406). The Pentateuch is not completely devoid of poetry (cp. Genesis 49; Exodus 15, etc.), but the rarest D-stem even in the poetic sections is the relatively common polel כּוֹנְנוּ "establish" (Exodus 15:18; cp. Moses' Psalm 90:17).

Charts 2-4 and 6-7 show the D-stem distribution in the books following Moses' time but mainly before the exile.

The period from David to Isaiah shows an expansion (not really an explosion) of additional D-stems in use in poetry, which is precisely where one would expect to find unusual forms. These forms are not present in Joshua, Judges or 1 Samuel, even in poetic sections. In later works, especially Isaiah onward, the fullest use of alternate D-stems occurs. Since there is a marked difference between the use of D-stems in late Hebrew as opposed to that of Moses and Joshua, it seems clear that the JEDP theory of the authorship of the Pentateuch is absolutely untenable. We already understood this because of the testimony of Scripture, especially the witness of Jesus himself in the Gospels.[a] But here is evidence also from a study of the language itself, a study which shows that the speculations of Graf & Wellhausen are incorrect and unfounded.

CONCLUSION

These categories of piel uses have been identified based on usage within the Hebrew text, and perhaps there are more than these. The list and examples presented here might be useful both to translating and to identifying the way a piel verb is used in a passage for homiletic or teaching purposes. It would please this presenter no end to have these observations criticized, debated, modified, and built upon. If my humble shoulders, so very low to the ground as they are, might serve as a place for others to stand, I would be honored, and God would be glorified.

In some cases, a single piel form will be used in two or more of these categories. If these observations help us to consider the nuances of God's word more carefully and gain a slightly deeper understanding for the inspired text, then God be praised. I maintain that better exegesis is a step toward better preaching and teaching.

In Christ,
Pastor Tim Smith

February 19, 2019
Tyler, Minnesota

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[a] Matthew 8:4; 19:8; Mark 1:44; 7:10; 10:5; 12:26; Luke 5:14; 16:29; 16:31; 20:37; 24:27; 24:44; John 1:17; 3:14; 5:45-46; 6:32; 7:22-23.

APPENDIX:

The Distribution of the Piel in Biblical Hebrew

Chart 1. The Pentateuch and Psalm 90

	Gen	Exod	Lev	Num	Deut	Ps. 90	
Piel	332	439	322	278	337	6	1714
Pual	20	30	10	8	9	-	77
Poel	1	3	1	3	1	1	10
Poal	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Polel	-	1	-	-	3	3	7
Polal	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Palel	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Pilel	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Pilpel	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
Pilpal	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Pilal	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Pulal	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Pael	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Peil	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total	357	473	333	289	350	10	**1812**

Chart 2. The Former Prophets

	Joshua	Judges	1 Sam	2 Sam	1 Kings	2 Kings	
Piel	126	119	172	164	191	164	936
Pual	4	12	3	6	7	7	38
Poel	-	-	1	1	2	2	6
Poal	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Polel	-	5	1	6	-	-	13
Polal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Palel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilpel	-	-	-	4	8	-	12
Pilpal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Polpal	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Pilal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pulal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pael	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	130	136	177	181	210	173	1007

Chart 3. The Late Historical Books

	1 Chron	2 Chron	Ezra	Nehem.	
Piel	83	181	26	51	341
Pual	6	8	4	3	21
Poel		1	1		2
Poal					
Polel	7	6	3	9	25
Polal				1	1
Palel					
Pilel					
Pilpel		2		1	3
Pilpal					
Pilal					
Pulal					
Pael			7		7
Peil			14		14
Total	96	198	55	65	414

Chart 4. The Major Prophets

	Isaiah	Jerem	Ezekiel	Daniel	
Piel	344	373	310	45	1072
Pual	65	27	28	1	121
Poel	10	6	2	3	21
Poal	2	1			3
Polel	18	6	11	1	36
Polal			1		1
Palel		1			1
Pilel			1		1
Pilpel	8	3			11
Pilpal	1		1		2
Pilal					
Pulal	5	2			7
Pael				59	59
Peil				24	24
Total	453	419	354	133	1359

Note: The Aramaic verse of Jeremiah (10:11) has no D-stem verbs.

Chart 5a. The Minor Prophets (Hosea – Micah)

	Hosea	Joel	Amos	Obadiah	Jonah	Micah	
Piel	67	22	26	4	11	27	156
Pual	7	1	1	1	-	-	10
Poel	2	-	-	-	-	1	3
Poal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Polel	1	-	-	-	2	1	4
Polal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Palel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilpel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilpal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Polpal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pulal	1	2	-	-	-	-	3
Pael	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	78	25	27	5	13	29	177

Chart 5b. The Minor Prophets (Nahum-Malachi)

	Nahum	Habakk	Zeph	Haggai	Zech	Malachi	
Piel	27	21	14	1	45	31	139
Pual	7	1	1	1	5	3	18
Poel	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Poal	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Polel	-	1	1	-	3	-	5
Polal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Palel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilpel	-	1	-	-	1	1	3
Pilpal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Polpal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pilal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pulal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pael	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	36	24	16	2	54	35	167

Chart 6: The Megilloth

	Ruth	**Song**	**Eccles**	**Lament**	**Esther**	
Piel	26	24	51	47	52	200
Pual	1	6	6	2	4	19
Poel		1	1	2		4
Poal			1	1		2
Polel		2		1		3
Polal						
Palel						
Pilel		1				1
Pilpel	1		1			2
Pilpal						
Pealal				2		2
Pulal				1		1
Pael						
Peil						
Total	28	34	60	56	56	234

Chart 7: Distribution of the Piel in the Psalms of Asaph compared with Job

	Ps. 50	**Ps 73-74**	**Ps 75-77**	**Ps 78-79**	**Ps 80-81**	**Ps 82-83**	**Job**	
Piel	10	14	14	30	16	6	254	344
Pual	-	2	1	1	1	-	26	31
Poel	-	1	-	-	-	-	4	5
Poal	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Polel	-	-	-	-	1	-	8	9
Polal	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2
Palel	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pilel	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pilpel	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pilal	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	10	17	16	31	18	6	298	396

Comments: Job: 85.2 % piel   8% pual   7% other (mostly poel, polel)
                  Asaph: 92 % piel   5% pual   3% other (mostly poel, polel)

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